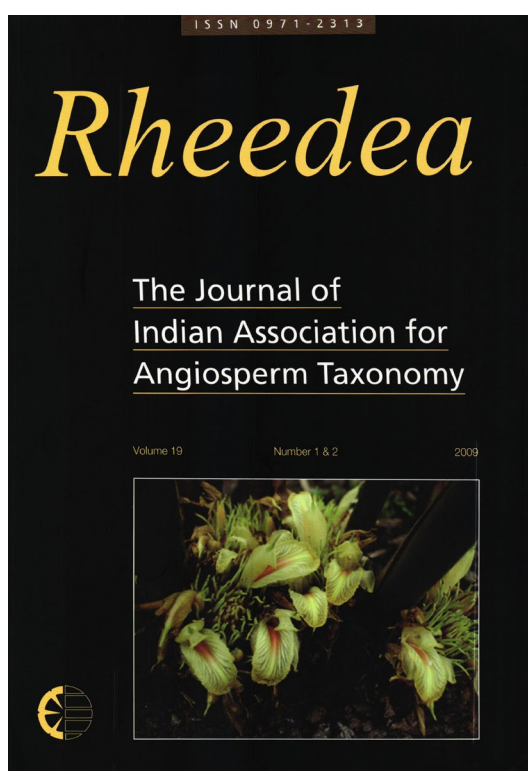




## Book Review: Waterlilies in India Taxonomy and Cultivation of the Genus *Nymphaea* L. (Nymphaeaceae)

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## Book Review

R. Ansari and G. Jeeja 2009

**Waterlilies in India Taxonomy and Cultivation of the Genus *Nymphaea* L. (Nymphaeaceae)**, Indian Association for Angiosperm Taxonomy, Calicut University, Calicut, 88 pp, multicolour

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Waterlilies have always posed problems to the taxonomists. I first came across this problem when I tried to fix the vernacular names relating to waterlilies mentioned in ancient Tamil literature to their correct Botanical names. But, in this process I miserably failed, since only two valid species of *Nymphaea* were recognized by botanists as far as southern India was concerned. It is heartening to find that Dr. R. Ansari and Dr. G. Jeeja have taken up this problem in their book.

The authors have described 16 taxa of *Nymphaea* from India, out of which 6 are exotic. For 4 species they have recognized sub-specific categories. However, they have not taken the trouble of mentioning in their book the characters on which these sub specific taxa have been recognized by them. The reader has to go through the entire descriptions in order to find the differences between them or to refer to the key provided at the beginning of the book. The reviewer feels that since it is a taxonomic monograph the authors should have given additional supportive characters of distinction relating to palenology, for example to justify their erection of subspecific categories.

There is some confusion regarding the occurrence of flowering in the two Kashmir species under cultivation. On page 13, the authors say, that these two species took about "15 years to establish fully and produce flowers", but on page 21 they say that these two species "did not establish in the garden since, they could not acclimatize to the tropical conditions". The point here is, whether the two Himalayan species flowered or not in the Malabar Botanical Gardens. There are a few grammatical and constructional mistakes in the book. As instances may be: Page 13, third line "hold" should be "held". Page 23, last sentence of second para.

The book has been brought out very well by IAAT, the printing, layout etc. are very good, however the cost is a little on the higher side for a book of this size. The book will be of great use to people working on Water Plants, Horticulturists and Botanists.

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